

USA Postal History

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A Brief History of the United States Postal Service

The story of the development of systems of communication is the history of modern civilization for our modern social and economic life is dependent upon communication. A most important element in modern communication is the transmission of messages by written word. This is the function of the Postal Service.

The first record of any system for transmitting written messages was made in the fifth century B.C. by Herodotus, a Greek historian. He wrote of men on horseback carrying messages written on bronze tablets. His vivid description of these men inspired the words over the main entrance of the New York City Post Office which have come to exemplify the spirit of the Postal Service: "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

King Louis XI of France established what is generally accepted as the first formal postal system. Regular messengers carried the messages with their arrival announced by golden horns. Like most early postal systems, the service was restricted to high officials' use. It was more than half a century later in 1516, that postal service was first made available to the public. In that year regular service was inaugurated between Vienna and Berlin. The first postal system in England was established in 1523, but it was limited to members of the royal family.

Here in America the Aztec Indians, who lived in what is now southwestern United States, had a system of messengers to carry parcels. Historians report that the Aztecs utilized this crude "parcel post" system to distribute their catch of fish among various villages of their tribes.

The first official postal system in the United States was established by the General Court of Massachusetts in 1639. It provided for all mail arriving from abroad to be delivered to Richard Fairbanks of Boston. Fairbanks forwarded each letter to its destination for a penny each.

In 1672 a monthly post between New York City and Boston was set up by Governor Lovelace of New York. The route followed what is now the Boston Post Road—U. S. Route 1.

Philadelphia got its first post office in 1683, by order of Governor William Penn. In the same year a post route extending from Maine to Georgia was established over routes that have become the trunk highways of the Eastern Seaboard.

In 1691 the British Crown appointed as its first Post Master General for the American Colonies Andrew Hamilton of Edinburgh. Benjamin Franklin, who was later to become the first Post Master General under the Continental Congress, took his first postal appointment in 1737 as Post Master at Philadelphia.

Franklin became joint Postmaster General for the north British Colonies in America in 1753 and served until 1774, when he was dismissed by the Crown because of his sympathies with the cause of the American colonists. Many improvements in the colonial postal system were made under his administration. Despite poor roads and great distances between centers of population, Franklin made the Postal Service an efficient and reliable system of communication. Service between New York and Philadelphia was increased from once to three times a week in summer and from twice a month to once a week in winter; Post roads were in operation from Maine to Florida and from New York to Canada; and mail between the colonies and the mother country was operated on a monthly schedule.

Franklin was appointed head of the American Postal System by the Continental Congress on July 26, 1775. His salary was \$1,000 a year and he served until November 7, 1776. To Franklin, in great measure, belongs the credit for the establishment of a sound Postal Service.

Following the ratification of the Constitution, and the establishment of our present system of Government, George Washington, on September 26, 1789, appointed Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts to serve as Postmaster General. At that time the Postal Service was a part of the Treasury Department, and it remained so until 1829 when the Postmaster General became a member of the President's Cabinet.

Postage for a letter weighing less than one ounce and composed of a single sheet of paper was six cents for a distance of 30 miles. The rate reached a maximum of 25 cents for more than 400 miles.

Before 1847, postage was paid to the Postmaster and he noted it on the letter either in writing or with a rubber

stamp. On March 3, 1847, legislation was enacted authorizing the Postmaster General to issue stamps. The first adhesive stamps for prepayment of postage went on sale in New York City on July 1, 1847.

As the nation spread westward the postal service was extended also with its most active expansion following the discovery of gold in California in 1848. The first trans-continental mail reached Los Angeles in May of that year.

The pony express, a private enterprise, was inaugurated between St. Joseph, Mo., and Sacramento, California, on April 3, 1860, to give faster mail transportation to and from the Pacific Coast. The first mail took 10 and a half days and a total of 75 ponies were used. The fastest time made was 7 days and 17 hours to deliver the inaugural address of President Lincoln in 1861. The company charged five dollars for each half-ounce at the beginning of the Pony Express, but later this cost was reduced to one dollar. The service was discontinued in October, 1861. "Buffalo Bill" Cody was one of the early pony express riders.

To afford greater security in sending money and valuables through the mails, the Registry System was established in 1855. Nine years later an additional step in this direction with introduction of money orders in 139 post offices. Money order service was extended to foreign countries in 1867.

Other improvements in service followed:

In 1858 street letter boxes were introduced so that postal patrons would not have to go to the post office for the purpose of mailing letters.

Free delivery of mail was inaugurated in 49 cities in 1863. There were 440 carriers so employed the first year and the cost of the service was \$300,000.

Up until 1861 all mail carried on trains was distributed in post offices. In that year the postmaster at St. Joseph, Missouri, tried out a method of sorting mail on a moving train by route agents between Hannibal and St. Joseph, in an attempt to avoid delays in mail departures for the West. The experiment was successful. In 1864 the first officially sponsored test of a railway post office car was made on August 28 between Chicago, Illinois, and Clinton, Iowa. On December 22 of that year the Post Office Department appointed a deputy in charge of railway post offices and railway mails. This marked the beginning of the Railway Mail Service.

Postal cards were first used in 1873. In 1885, to accommodate patrons who wanted prompt delivery of mail upon receipt at the post office, the Special Delivery Service was established.

One of the most far-reaching developments was the inauguration of Rural Free Delivery on October 1, 1896. On that date five routes were placed in operation in West Virginia. Today there are over 32,500 rural routes serving nearly 35 million people.

The Postal Saving System was established in 1911 as a convenient and safe depository for the accumulation of savings and to encourage thrift. Originally the maximum that could be placed in a postal savings account was \$500, but it has been increased to \$2,500.

One of the most widely used services is Parcel Post which was inaugurated in 1913. An early result was a greatly increased exchange of farm products and goods between the rural and urban areas. The Post Office Department handles more than 1,250,000,000 pieces of parcel post annually. Insurance and collect-on-delivery services were also instituted during 1913.

Air Mail service which was established in 1918 is probably the most dramatic and appealing branch of the Postal Service. The first air mail route ran between Washington, D. C., and New York City and was inaugurated on May 15, 1918. The next year service was established between Cleveland, Ohio, and Chicago, Illinois, and by May 15, 1920, it was possible to send a letter by air from New York to San Francisco. The first transcontinental night flight started from San Francisco on February 22, 1921, and ended at Hazlehurst Field on Long Island, New York, 33 hours and 21 minutes later.

The first carriage of mail by air to a foreign country was between Seattle, Washington, and Victoria, British Columbia, on October 15, 1920, although it was not until 1927 that regular foreign air mail service was in operation.

Trans-Pacific air mail was inaugurated in 1935 between San Francisco and the Philippine Islands, and in 1939 Trans-Atlantic service was established. (FOR AIR MAIL DEVELOPMENT, SEE: "HISTORY OF AIR POSTAL TRANSPORT.")

In 1941, the first Highway Post Office Route was established between Washington, D. C., and Harrisonburg, Va.

Later on in 1941 routes were established in Indiana and California, and at present there are over 90 Highway Post Office Routes in operation serving more than 2,000 post offices throughout the Nation. The Highway Post Office Service utilizes busses which provide facilities for the distribution of mail in transit. It is the most efficient and effective means for transporting and delivering mail in areas where rail service has become inadequate, in new metropolitan areas that have grown up outside of the service range of railroads, and in areas where parallel railroad lines require interlocking service and service to intermediate cities and towns.

In 1943 the Postal Zoning System was placed in operation in 124 of the larger post offices. This method of addressing mail had been in use in some foreign countries, and it was found that it enabled faster distribution and sorting of the mail, especially by less experienced personnel.

On April 29, 1947, the Post Office Department introduced the Air Letter Sheet, a Government designed self-contained letter on which messages could be written on the inside of the envelope. 140 of these messages constitute only a pound, and the low cost of these enables messages to be dispatched anywhere in the world for 10 cents. This innovation to postal facilities was designed to speed brief communications to foreign lands.

Helicopter air mail service was inaugurated in the Los Angeles area on October 1, 1947. This service is designed to shuttle the mail from an airport to the post office in such a manner as to save hours in transportation handlings. The mail is also delivered by helicopter from the main post office to surrounding cities and towns on regularly scheduled routes, thus eliminating the time lost in transit by mail trucks through heavily congested city traffic. Similar service was inaugurated in the Chicago, Illinois, area on August 20, 1949, and in the New York City area in October 1952.

On March 15, 1948, Foreign Air Parcel Post Service was inaugurated to 23 foreign countries and has been extended so that today it is available to more than 60 countries in every section of the world.

On September 1, 1948, Domestic Air Parcel Post Service was instituted in the United States and its territories and possessions. This service is also available to members of the armed forces and civilians receiving mail through APO's.

In February 1951 the Post Office Department inaugurated the use of trucks for short mail routes in various sections of the country. Over 300 routes are now in operation.

On July 2, 1951, the Post Office Department inaugurated a new money order in the form of a punched card instead of the customary paper slip making it possible to have a money order cashed at any of the nation's post offices, or collected through any bank in the same manner as the depositing or cashing of a check.

1953 saw many important changes in the operation of the Post Office Department as the new Postmaster General, Arthur E. Summerfield, took over. They included establishment of a Bureau of Personnel for the Post Office Department and establishment of regional operational offices.

The most dramatic was begun October 6, 1953 when regular mail was first flown on a space-available basis both ways between New York and Chicago. This service has been expanded to some other cities with the result that millions of letters are reaching their destinations hours earlier and surveys are being made to determine advisability of general use of the system.

The Post Office Today

The growth of the Postal Service reflects the development of the country to a greater degree than any other Agency of the Federal Government. In 1776 there were only 28 post offices in operation, and 14 of these were located in Massachusetts. In 1789, when Samuel Osgood was appointed first Postmaster General under the Constitution, there were but 75 post offices, and the mails were carried on 1,875 miles of road. Today there are 41,000 post offices throughout the country, employing over 500,000 postal workers. In the fiscal year 1952 the United States mails were carried over 1,492,935 miles of rural routes; 162,167 miles of domestic air mail routes; over 140,000 miles of railroads, and to every country in the world by sea and air.

In 1812, in the City of New York there were only four clerks in the Post Office and part of their compensation was lodging with the Postmaster. Today the New York City Post Office employs more than 30,000 postal workers.

The Post Office Department today is the world's largest public utility. Its revenues were \$1,947,316,280 for the fiscal year 1952; the pieces of mail handled 49,905,927,487; and the weight of this mail in pounds 11,500,515,665.

Because the Postal Service is a part of the people whom it serves, it is ever responsive and alert to their needs. The great traditions of the Post Office Department may be summed up in one word—Service. And a fitting description of that service is contained in the inscription which is carved on the Main Post Office Department Building in Washington.

"The Post Office Department, in its ceaseless labors, pervades every channel of commerce and every theatre of human enterprise, and, while visiting as it does kindly, every fire-side, mingles with the throbbing of almost every heart in the land. In the amplitude of its beneficence, it ministers to all climes, and creeds, and pursuits, with the same eager readiness and with equal fulness of fidelity. It is the delicate ear trumpet, through which alike nations and families and isolated individuals whisper their joys and their sorrows, their convictions and their sympathies, to all who listen for their coming."

The present Postmaster General, Arthur E. Summerfield, is the 54th under our Constitution. He is from Flint, Michigan.

The Post Office Department is proud of the service which it has given to the people—not only because it transports mail quickly and efficiently—but because it has been and will continue to be a bond of communications between countrymen and the people of the world, ever striving to progress as the Nation advances—and to open up avenues of opportunity for understanding between ourselves and among nations.

A Brief History of the Development of the International Postal Service

The history of the International Postal Service and its development is not merely the story of postal service down through the centuries. It is much more; it is the saga of the progress of the peoples of the world—their lives, their hopes, their trials and their constant and compelling desire to better themselves. It is the story of civilization—a story of discovery, of conquest, of settlement in new lands, of migrations of millions of people winning for themselves and their children a new life of hope and freedom. It is a story of the building and the operation of democracy at its best.

The International Postal Service today, as in the past, is the main instrumentality of communication between the nations of the world; it is a strong force binding the peoples of the world more closely together socially; it is the right arm of commerce and industry; it is a means for dissemination of news and culture and for the interchange of ideas.

The beginnings of International Postal Service are lost in the mists of the early history of transportation and communications. The growth of the great universities in the 11th and 12th centuries and the Hanseatic League of Germanic cities and towns with their vast foreign trade at about the same time appear to have made necessary and did cause the organization of scheduled courier services which grew by a process of evolution into the postal service of the several European countries. From the beginning the couriers seemed to have engaged in carrying private messages as well as the messages of the business with which they were concerned.

Beginnings in the United States of America

International posts between the American colonies and other countries were first established when the General Court of Massachusetts on November 5, 1639, ordered that letters from "beyond the seas or ones to be sent thither" be brought to the home of Richard Fairbanks in Boston, who would "take care that they be delivered, or sent according to their directions." Fairbanks was allowed a penny for each letter.

The appointment of Benjamin Franklin as joint Postmaster General for the North British Colonies in America

... was the ~~the~~ improvements in postal operations, for the shipment of mails between the Colonies and England.

Great impetus to the interchange of mails with other countries was given by the United States Congress in 1792 when that body enacted legislation authorizing the Postmaster General to make informal arrangements with postal administrations in other countries for reciprocal mail service. During that same year, an agreement for the exchange of mail between the United States and Canada was negotiated.

The passage of further legislation in 1825 and again in 1827 providing for the exchange of mails between the United States and other countries enlarged the scope of international mails.

A further step forward came about in 1844 when Congress enacted legislation authorizing the Postmaster General to enter into formal agreements with other countries for the exchange of mails. The first agreement was concluded in 1847 with the Hanseatic Republic of Bremen, at that time an autonomous German State. This was followed in 1848 by an agreement with Great Britain.

In the International Postal Service the various categories of mail are not designated as first, second, third and fourth class as in the domestic service. The first three classes are replaced in the international service by the categories of letters, post cards, prints, commercial papers, samples of merchandise, raised matter for the blind and small packets, which are known as "Postal Union Mails," and are handled in accordance with the provisions of the multilateral agreement established by the Universal Postal Union. Parcel post service between the United States and other countries is generally handled in accordance with agreements which are mentioned below under the heading "Parcel Post Agreements."

Universal Postal Union

Prior to the founding of the Universal Postal Union, the International Postal Service generally was in an unsatisfactory condition. The principal problem was the lack of uniform agreements among various countries regarding classification of mail matter, rates of postage, weight and size restrictions and other fundamental factors.

Realizing the urgent need for the promulgation of certain principles that would bring about uniformity in the international postal field, Postmaster Montgomery Blair of the United States in 1862 suggested a conference of interested nations for the purpose of exchanging ideas and agreeing on certain principles which would serve as a basis for future international postal agreements. The following year, the first conference of 15 countries was held at Paris, France. The deliberations ended in the adoption of 31 articles of "general principles of such a nature as to facilitate relations among peoples, through the postal service, capable of being used as a basis for international conventions governing such relations." These articles proved to be the nucleus for the first "Treaty Concerning the Formation of a General Postal Union."

The first Postal Congress convened at Berne, Switzerland, in 1874 pursuant to the suggestion of Heinrich von Stephan, then Director General of Posts of the North German Confederation. The United States, Egypt, and all the countries of Europe were represented. After 24 days of deliberation, an agreement was reached on all points and the constitutive treaty of the General Postal Union was concluded. That treaty brought about a revision in international postal relations. Uniformity took the place of the multiple differences in rates and regulations, postage was considerably reduced, and barriers were broken down by the stipulation that the contracting countries should form a single postal territory.

The name of the General Postal Union was changed to "Universal Postal Union" at the Congress of Paris in 1878. Congresses of this Union, held every five years, revise the regulations respecting all phases of the international mails. The Thirteenth Universal Postal Union Congress convened in Brussels on May 14, 1952, and concluded its sessions on July 12, 1952.

Postal Union of the Americas and Spain

There is another postal union known as the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain, the signatories to which comprise the Republics of North, Central and South America and Canada, as well as Spain. The Congresses of this Union meet not later than two years after each Universal Postal Union Congress to revise the current convention and regulations.

Parcel Post Agreements

In addition to participating actively as a member of the Universal Postal Union and the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain, the United States exchanges parcel post with every Postal Administration in the world, either in accordance with bilateral agreements or the multilateral agreement as part of the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain. The first bilateral agreement was concluded with Jamaica in 1887. The first agreement to be concluded with a European country was the one with Germany in 1899.

International Money Order Service

The international money order service came into being on July 27, 1868, when President Andrew Johnson signed an Act authorizing the Postmaster General to make conventions for the exchange of orders with countries with which the Post Office Department had negotiated postal conventions. Service was initiated with Switzerland, pursuant to the terms of a convention signed at Washington, D. C., on July 2, 1869, by Postmaster General John A. J. Creswell, and at Berne on July 26, 1869, by the Chief of the Federal Post Department of Switzerland. The new service began operations on September 1, 1869, and 150 post offices in this country were authorized to issue and pay international money orders. Today, we have conventions with more than 60 foreign postal administrations for the exchange of money orders.

Ocean Mail Service

Congress gave the Postmaster General authority in 1845 to enter into contracts for the carriage of foreign mail. Prior to that time, the Postmaster General worked out arrangements as best he could with postal administrations and shipowners for the transportation of mail overseas.

Following the enactment of this enabling legislation in 1845, the Post Office Department on October 4 of that year advertised for contracts to carry the mails to the countries in Europe, Central America, and across the Pacific. The first contract service to Europe was from New York to Bremen, with a stop at the ports of Cowes or Southampton, England, with the mail being carried on the *S. S. Washington* which sailed on June 1, 1847. The records show that by June of 1851 there were six foreign mail routes with an estimated length of 18,349 miles, and an annual mileage performance of 612,326 miles costing \$1,423,250.

Congress passed an Act on March 3, 1891 "to provide for ocean mail service between the United States and foreign ports and to promote commerce," and delegated to the Postmaster General authority to enter into contracts. This enabled the Post Office Department to contract for sufficient shipping and space to take care of its needs in handling overseas mails, and, pursuant to the provisions of this Act, contracts were entered into for the transportation of mails on several ocean mail routes.

Under the Merchant Marine Acts of 1920 and 1928, the authority of the Postmaster General to contract for ocean mail service was continued but with the additional provisions that it be done to aid in the development of a United States Merchant Marine Fleet and in the expansion of foreign and coastwise trade in ships under the United States flag.

These Acts were superseded by the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, which created the United States Maritime Commission as the agency to further the development and maintenance of an adequate and well-balanced American merchant marine, to promote the commerce of the United States and to aid in the national defense. This same act, although repealing the powers and duties vested in the Postmaster General with regard to ocean mail contracts, provided that all mails of the United States shall insofar as practicable be carried on vessels of United States registry.

International Air Mail Service

Wilbur and Orville Wright invented and built the world's first power driven heavier-than-air machine and made the first successful flight, which lasted only 12 seconds, in 1903. The progress since made in the science of aviation is such that no country on the globe is now more than 60 hours distant from the United States by air.

On May 15, 1918, the Post Office Department inaugurated air mail service between Washington, D. C., and New York, N. Y. Two years later it was possible to send a letter by air from New York City to San Francisco.

It was only natural that the Postal Service should look upon this means of expediting mail to other countries. A contract was let by the Post Office Department to Edward Hubbard to carry mail by air between Seattle, Wash., and Victoria, British Columbia, 74 miles away, and he began service on October 15, 1920. The purpose of this route was

to fly mail which had accumulated in Seattle after the departure of steamships bound for the Orient and to place it on board when the vessel reached Victoria. Likewise, mail on board steamships bound for the United States was taken off at Victoria and flown to Seattle. The contractor was paid \$200 a round trip and service was maintained until June 30, 1937.

The first international air mail route was established on November 1, 1920, between Key West, Fla., and Havana, Cuba. This service was discontinued in 1923.

Regular air mail service between Key West, Fla., and Havana, Cuba, was again established on October 19, 1927. This marks the beginning of the international air mail service as we know it today.

The value of mail being carried by air to overseas points was recognized by Congress. On March 8, 1928, that body enacted legislation authorizing the Postmaster General to enter into contracts for a period of not more than 10 years for the transportation of mail by air to other countries and insular possessions of the United States.

Following the passage of this legislation, many international air mail routes were established. On October 1, 1928, service was inaugurated between New York City and Montreal, Canada. Routes were established from Miami, Fla., to Nassau, Bahamas, on January 2, 1929, to San Juan, Puerto Rico, on January 9, 1929; to Cristobal, Canal Zone, on February 4, 1929, and from Brownsville, Tex., to Mexico City on March 10, 1929. By the end of 1930 the United States was linked by air with practically all countries in the Western Hemisphere.

A great forward step in overseas air transport was taken on November 22, 1935, by the inauguration of trans-Pacific air mail service from San Francisco by way of Hawaii, Midway, Wake, and Guam to the Philippines. The service was extended to Hong Kong on April 21, 1937; to Singapore on May 3, 1941; to New Zealand on July 12, 1940, and to Australia on January 28, 1947. On September 1, 1946, service was inaugurated from Seattle to Alaska, and to the Orient on July 15, 1947.

After the enactment of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, trans-Atlantic air service was inaugurated on May 20, 1939, from New York City via Bermuda and Portugal, to Marseille, France, and on June 24 of that same year a route was inau-

gured between New York and Great Britain by way of Canada and Newfoundland. On December 6, 1941, direct air service to Africa was made possible by the inauguration of a route from Miami to the Belgian Congo.

Further expansion of international air mail routes was interrupted during the War, but since 1945 there has been a tremendous increase in international air transport. United States air carriers now furnish air mail service to any part of the globe, transporting in a matter of hours mail that formerly took weeks to deliver. In fact, it is possible to circle the world in approximately 140 hours on planes operated by American companies.

Reductions of as much as 66 percent were made in international air mail postage rates on November 1, 1946. This was done to encourage a greater use of our air facilities. On April 29, 1947, the "ten-cent air letter sheet," which may be sent to any country in the world, was inaugurated. International Air Parcel Post was inaugurated on March 15, 1948. Air mail service for regular mail articles other than letters and post cards was inaugurated on May 1, 1949.

The International Postal Service Today

Today, more than ever, the International Postal Service is playing a vital and important role in maintaining a bond of communications between the United States of America and the rest of the world. In the days to come, the international service will continue to grow and to advance, taking advantage of every means to deliver the mails entrusted to its care—quickly, efficiently, and safely.

Excerpts of Special Interest to Postmasters from Speeches of Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield

*National Convention, The National Association
of Postmasters*

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, OCTOBER 29, 1953

I am sure you will agree that we together share a most solemn obligation to make the postal establishment of the United States a bright and shining symbol of one of our most cherished democratic institutions which rightfully commands the affection and respect of all of our citizens.

You will note that I emphasize the word "together" because your management team of the Post Office Department in Washington knows the postmasters of the country are the managers in the field, and that no matter how intelligently we may plan for the future, our efforts will fall far short of their potentialities unless they receive your enthusiastic support. In the final analysis it is people, not machines, nor laws, nor buildings alone that make any service great.

That is why I am particularly glad to report to you field managers on the progress made during the past nine months. The start we have made, and our plans for the future, will, I am certain, make your vitally important jobs more effective and more pleasant as we jointly improve the mail service and lower the costs to the taxpayers.

* * * *

We propose to decentralize the management of our operations, setting up regional offices throughout the country to assure more intimate knowledge of local conditions, better financial control, and more intelligent allocation of funds on the basis of current volume fluctuations and workload requirements. Through decentralization we expect to obtain maximum results from our program of performance standards and manpower controls. We should obtain better coordination in relating our various activities to the needs of local post offices, including facilities planning, supply, motor vehicle use, mail bag movement and other such supporting activities.

This plan to bring postal management closer to postal operations ultimately will use the knowledge, ability and interest of each local postmaster and his staff supervisors. It will place more responsibility and authority at the local level and minimize the absentee control of operations by a remote headquarters in Washington.

* * * *

Beginning relatively soon, according to present plans, each of the approximately 4000 postmasters in the states of Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky will be able to get quick help from a management official near at hand on day-to-day operation problems and technical interpretations which now require communication with the Bureau of Operations in Washington.

The former method of referring every conceivable question or request for instructions to Washington not only killed the initiative of the local post office management but also delayed decision on simple matters for weeks and tended toward a tradition-ridden approach to every problem.

This program, when fully operating throughout the country following the pilot test in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, should permit post offices to respond more quickly to local needs and changing conditions, improve relations with the public and postal employees, encourage local interest in cost reduction and relieve Washington officials of details so they may better concentrate on solving the many broad problems facing the Post Office Department.

This regional management plan, applying the yardstick of reason and performance in the field, gives management one more way to recognize and reward merit and faithful service and detect inefficiencies. It is not a new idea; it was recommended by the Hoover Commission in 1949, as well as by many other persons and agencies who have had intimate knowledge of the Post Office Department and its problems. The plan is basically the same one followed by successful business organizations which operate successfully over wide areas of the country.

* * * *

In short, by establishing regional offices we shall reverse the trend toward Big Government in Washington. We shall put the Post Office Department management closer to its own people and closer to the people it serves, and we believe

everyone will not only be made happier by this arrangement but will also benefit by better mail service.

* * * *

In our early reviews of the Postal Establishment it became quite evident that postal service was poor and getting progressively worse. Many of the fine old traditions of the postal service were overlooked or forgotten. This function of Government closest to the average citizen—this once-proud Postal Establishment—had become the butt of comedians' jokes, the target of the cartoonists' pen, the laughing stock of scathing editorial and news comment.

Thousands of postal employees, bewildered and embittered, were being blamed for mistakes which were primarily the fault of poor supervision or poor management. The morale of employees had nose-dived to an all-time low.

In what seems to me to be a colossal oversight we found there was no adequate training program for postal workers. Except for a few localized and inadequate exceptions—there was no attempt to train postal employees to do the kind of job they want to do . . . and there was no overall program to train supervisors so they could supply the kind of leadership necessary for an efficient operation.

To remedy this situation and to assure proper handling of personnel matters we have requested and received permission from Congress to create a new Bureau of Personnel, with an Assistant Postmaster General in charge. All personnel matters will be handled by this Bureau instead of the present system whereby each Bureau handles its own problems. A nationwide training program will be undertaken promptly under the auspices of this new Bureau.

* * * *

We believe merit and service should be rewarded but we do not favor the use of Civil Service regulations as a cloak to hide inefficiency.

We are pleased that many postmasters are leading citizens of their towns and cities and consequently take a prominent part in the civic affairs of their communities. We encourage them to do so, having confidence in their judgment that these outside voluntary activities will not take time away from the full performance of their responsibilities as postmasters.

OPENING OF FIRST REGIONAL OFFICE

Netherland Plaza Hotel, Cincinnati

NOVEMBER 24, 1953

Our philosophy can, I think, best be expressed in these terms: *It may be inevitable and justifiable to hand down to our children and our children's children part of the cost of fighting wars we did not seek and could not avoid. We have been fighting to save a world that they, please God, will some day inherit and enjoy in peace and prosperity. But there is no possible justification for our handing down to those generations our unpaid postage bills.*

* * * *

Many of us—too many of us—are inclined to take this business of communication too much for granted. But—consider for just a moment—how much any one of the hundreds of millions of captive slaves behind the Iron Curtain would give to be able to enjoy the freedom we enjoy every day in exchanging our news and our thoughts with our neighbors.

Lines of communication are Liberty's first creation—and tyranny's first victim.

For tyranny can exist only in a climate of fear and ignorance, where each man gropes hopelessly in a darkened cell, unable to learn who is with him and who is against him.

GENERAL MEETING OF OHIO, KENTUCKY AND INDIANA POSTMASTERS

Taft Auditorium, Cincinnati

NOVEMBER 24, 1953

In this room today there are many thousands of years of accumulated postal experience . . . operational experience. It would be foolhardy indeed if it were to fail to tap that tremendous natural asset.

We do not intend to be that foolhardy.

We made no claim to be all-knowing or all-wise. Almost every part of our program to *increase* the service and *decrease* the deficit has been suggested before by postmasters or by postal employees. There is nothing new about our program—the only innovation is that we're prepared to act upon your suggestions.

Many of you have become discouraged in the past because your suggestions have been shunted about the Department, from echelon to echelon, gathering a formidable array of initials but initiating no action, until at last, battered and dust-covered, weighted down by bureaucratic indifference, it sank wearily into an obscure filing cabinet.

Ladies and gentlemen—fellow postal workers—that day is past.

Count on that.

During the first nine months of our administration of the postal establishment we have paid out more than twice as much money for suggestions by employees than had been paid during any other comparable period in the history of the Department. Some of those payments have been as high as \$1,000. A short while ago we made a substantial payment for a suggestion that had been quietly burning grey with dust in the files of the Department for five *long years*.

Keep the suggestions coming. We want your advice. Work closely with your District Managers. Let them know your ideas. Your ideas will be taken seriously and—if practicable—will be acted upon.

There is just one further point I want to discuss in regard to responsibility . . . and that is the responsibility in your position as postmasters.

I know you all have a very keen realization of that responsibility. But it is a point that cannot be stressed too heavily.

The office of Postmaster is an ancient and honorable one. It is fraught with tradition—noble in accomplishments—heavy with responsibility.

No man of decency—or good sense—becomes a postmaster because he wants to get rich. No man of decency enters Government with that in mind.

No—any person entering Government service does so with a deepseated desire to make a contribution to the common welfare of his fellow men.

Government service—if faithfully followed requires long hours and small remuneration in comparison with the responsibility. We all give the Government the best of our years in the fond hope that we are building a sturdy bridge of freedom and prosperity over which our future generations will pass.

It is a worthy ambition. We—again—must be worthy of it. That means that in your community you *must* be second to none in the respect of your fellow citizens. You must be, at all times—as representatives in your community of the greatest Government in the world—upstanding, law-abiding, civic-minded citizens in the very first rank of patriots.

It is no easy thing to live up to the public and private responsibility of Postmaster. But if our way of life is to be honored at home and abroad—*it is a thing that must be done.*

It very seldom happens—and that itself is a tribute to your idealism and your patriotism—but when a Postmaster *does* fail in his duty—when he makes a public spectacle of himself, he dishonors the finest service in the world. And when he does that—our democracy dies a little.

This is not a one-way street. Your management team has an obligation equally as binding, equally as strong. We must make certain that we work with you at all times—that we support you one hundred percent when you are right—and to take every precaution that the glorious tradition of our service is not dragged in the slime and the mire of political opportunism.

We have met that obligation. We shall continue to do so. That's a promise.

I am very proud of the fact that—out of the first 100 permanent Postmasters appointed by President Eisenhower and approved by the Senate—80 were career employees who had earned the promotion through long and faithful service in the ranks.

Every Postmaster in this room—and every Postmaster in the country—can be assured that if he lives up to the high responsibility implicit in his position, he will have nothing to fear because of his political faith. That is a policy that will not be dishonored. It will continue as long as I am your Postmaster General. It will be continued as long as your present management team has the responsibility of directing the destinies of the postal establishment.

fore know many of them intimately. If I hold myself aloof they will think I am "stuck-up" and yet, as you said, it is dangerous to become too friendly with them. It presents a real problem to me.

Answer: New postmasters have much to learn. You will solve your problem in time. There is no better way to win the respect of your employees than to make them know by your attitude and actions that you are working with them. As a clerk you have worked for a postmaster before. Ask yourself why you preferred working for Mr. Brown rather than Mr. Smith. If your reasons are valid you may thus receive valuable assistance in getting started correctly in your postmaster duties. If you follow the four steps as outlined, there should be no difficulty.

Question: I notice you stressed the importance of giving credit where credit is due. Too often postmasters fail to recognize the work of faithful employees. Don't you think that such an attitude on our part is detrimental to initiative?

Answer: It certainly is. It is our responsibility to express our hearty appreciation to such employees. Doing so will cause them to continuously put forth their best efforts.

Question: The postmaster not only has employees to deal with but there seems to be an increasing number of irate patrons on the telephone and in the lobby that demand his attention. Many of these patrons have legitimate complaints. It presents a real problem. Have you any suggestions?

Answer: We suppose most of your complaints are the result of slow service or misdeliveries. It takes real diplomacy to solve complaints properly. You must attempt to satisfy your patrons and yet you can't permit an injustice to be done to your employees. A postmaster must train and instruct his employees. If the carriers will realize the importance of making correct deliveries such complaints may be kept at a minimum. Patrons are, as a rule, very thoughtful and considerate toward our service. If the employees take their work seriously and are tactful toward the public, complaints can usually be handled by them. Of course, if they make an excessive number of errors, the postmaster must take disciplinary action.

Principles of a Postmaster

Four principles which a good postmaster should bear in mind are these:

1. He should never make promises which he can't keep.
2. He should never take credit for someone else's good ideas.
3. He should give his workers a square deal.
4. He should not be afraid to admit his mistakes; he should never "pass the buck."

As a postmaster do you

1. Make promises which are unauthorized?
2. Give praise and credit when an employee is entitled to them?
3. Discard unnecessary regulations?
4. Discard impractical suggestions in an abrupt manner?
5. Get cooperation from your employees?
6. Solicit or accept gifts from your employees as a basis for favoritism?
7. Act promptly in giving reasons explaining changes?
8. Consider both sides of a problem before making your decision?
9. Take steps to see that good work and ability receive proper recognition?
10. Distribute the work load properly?
11. Encourage the idea that your subordinates work *with* you, not *for* you?

A Career Employee Takes a Look at His New Job

An employee who is promoted to the position of postmaster will find that a postmaster's duties are quite different from those of a worker.

A postmaster thinks in terms of human beings, not just in terms of machines. He must learn how to handle human beings successfully for their own best interests and also for the best interests of management. He must learn, too, to control his own impulses.

A postmaster's value to the department is no longer computed in terms of his own production; *his value is computed only in terms of the production of others*, his employees. Furthermore, the postmaster cannot always depend upon his employees. Because of the "human element," the postmaster must be prepared to make unexpected changes. Accidents and illness, for example, can upset the best of plans. The output of machines can be calculated with mechanical precision, but what people will do is unpredictable.

An employee is concerned only with his own problems. A postmaster is concerned with an additional set of problems: the problems of management. A postmaster thus occupies a key position. To the employees he represents management, and to management he represents the employees.

It should be clear, then, that when an employee is promoted to be a postmaster not only do his duties change but also his point of view changes.

Postmaster Pointers

Four points which a good postmaster should bear in mind are these:

1. When he is promoted to his position, a postmaster should carry on his new work without making enemies of his old friends (and fellow workers) by going "high hat."
2. He should praise his subordinates for jobs which are well done.
3. He must control himself (including his temper) if he wishes to keep the respect of his workers.
4. He should protect his men from unjust criticism.

Here are some questions which every good postmaster may use in evaluating himself:

1. Is he loyal to his men and to the department?
2. Does he recognize work which is done well?
3. Does he make uncomplimentary remarks about his own men?
4. Does he protect his men from unnecessary work or poor working conditions?
5. Does he control his temper (and his language, too)?
6. Does he have a sense of humor?
7. Does he keep written records in order to make sure that promises are not forgotten and details are not overlooked?
8. Does he try to allow for the other fellow's peculiarities?
9. Does he avoid discussing one employee in the presence of another?
10. Does he keep his head under trying conditions?
11. Can he take criticism, as well as give it?
12. Does he play politics in dealing with his workers?
13. Does he try to improve his ability as a postmaster?
14. When he discovers a mistake, does he jump to conclusions without considering the facts?

The postmaster must always remember in dealing with cases of absenteeism, tardiness, and loafing that his job is to get at the causes of these problems so that they may be eliminated, not to antagonize the employee. The postmaster can reach this goal only by means of a carefully planned approach based on the principles stated above.



Maintaining Good Working Conditions

There is more to being a good postmaster than just meeting production schedules. The postmaster has a real responsibility to his men to do all that he can to maintain satisfactory working conditions. To maintain such conditions, a good postmaster constantly:

1. Makes his post office a safe place in which to work.
2. Considers the physical requirements of his employees.
3. Makes his employees' problems his responsibilities.

**GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS MEAN GOOD
OPERATION**

Giving Orders

A basic factor in all production is the giving of orders. As a postmaster you will find the following suggestions to be of value:

1. GIVE ORDERS

CLEARLY—so that you will be understood.

COMPLETELY—so that you will include all essential matters.

CONCISELY—so that you will not waste time or confuse people through the use of unnecessary words and details.

CONFIDENTLY—so that people will not doubt your ability to supervise the job.

COURTEOUSLY—so that your subordinate will not be offended.

CONSIDERATELY—so that your orders will be reasonable.

CORRECTLY—so that there will be no errors that will result in lost production time.

DIRECTLY—so that the person who is to carry out the order will know that it is meant for him, not somebody else.

PROPERLY—and see that they are carried out.

2. Be sure that it is possible to carry out the order that you give.
3. Choose the right person for the job.

over what was then, as now, known as the Boston Post Road, U. S. Highway No. 1.

In 1683 Governor William Penn of Pennsylvania caused a post office to be set up in Philadelphia, giving authority to supply messengers and horses for carrying communications between Philadelphia and Newcastle.

In 1737 Benjamin Franklin was appointed Postmaster for Philadelphia, and in 1775 he was appointed Postmaster General by the Continental Congress. The difficulties were many. Each of the Colonies had its own postal service and operated independently of the others. They were not integrated, each having its own methods for handling mail and money. In fact, these difficulties were to play an important part in the cause of the Revolutionary War, since the colonies were then subject to the English Crown.

Since the postal system was the sole line of communication in those days, it was out of such condition that there was written into the Constitution of the United States—Section 8 of Article 1—that “Congress Shall Have Power to Establish Post Offices and Post Roads,” and it has operated in this manner ever since.

During Benjamin Franklin’s administration as Colonial Postmaster General there were less than 100 post offices, doing a volume of business of about \$75,000. Today there are about 41,000 post offices, doing an annual business of close to two billions of dollars—bringing the postal service to every city, village and hamlet, into even the most remote sections of our country.

Today the postal service is the largest business organization of its kind in the world, employing over 500,000 persons working in offices, on trains, highway trucks, rural and star routes, and walking the streets of your own city to deliver your mail.

Bringing postal information closer to home, this office was established in ——. The first year’s revenue was about \$—— and the postmaster, —— was the first employee. This PAST year the revenue was in excess of \$——, and —— employees are required to handle the volume of business, which comes close to —— tons of mail per year.

All employees in the postal service, including the postmaster, are selected as a result of U. S. Civil Service examinations.

In addition to the dates which were already mentioned, there are some other rather important dates which mark the development of the postal service, they being:

- 1847—First adhesive in U. S. authorized
- 1848—First overland mail arrived in California
- 1853—Stamped envelopes first authorized
- 1855—Registry of letters authorized
- 1858—Use of first street letter box authorized
- 1860—Pony express between St. Joseph, Mo., and Sacramento, Calif., requiring the use of 75 ponies and 7 days and 17 hours between points.
- 1862—Sorting of mails on train first attempted
- 1863—First city mail delivery authorized
- 1864—Domestic Money Order system authorized
 - First test of using railway cars for carrying mail
 - Beginning of the Railway Mail Service
- 1865—Printed stamped envelopes first authorized
- 1869—International Money Order System authorized
- 1873—First post cards offered to public
- 1875—Special Delivery service authorized
- 1896—Rural Free Delivery of mail authorized
- 1913—Parcel post delivery authorized
 - Insurance on parcel post inaugurated
 - COD service inaugurated
- 1918—First flight Air Mail from Washington D. C. to New York City
- 1920—First flight Air Mail from New York City to San Francisco
 - First flight Air Mail International from Seattle to Vancouver, B. C.
- 1935—First flight Air Mail from San Francisco to Philippines
- 1939—First flight Air Mail Transatlantic.
- 1941—First Highway post office established.
- 1947—First Helicopter air mail feed established at Los Angeles
- 1948—Domestic Air Parcel Post established
- 1949—Helicopter service established for cities surrounding Chicago
- 1951—Truck star route service established for cities surrounding Chicago
 - Punch Card Money Order System established

"How to interpret the postal bulletin was a feature I feel has been very helpful."

"Putting us in contact with postal procedures, rules, and regulations, has without question lessened the possibilities of error in our work," declared T. F. Hayek, from the shipping department at Eisendrath's.

* * * *

THIS IS AN AGE OF EFFICIENCY

IN MACHINES

BUT IT STILL TAKES THE EYES OF MAN

TO READ THE MAIL!

An Efficient Postmaster Writes Letters from His Heart

Letters from the postmaster can be blunt, cold and strictly business, or these letters can be friendly, warm and understanding. The messages from a postmaster can make friends or he may lose them. Good patron relations can be built or these relations can be torn down.

Your routine correspondence can make the right impressions for your post office or the bad impressions. Many of your patrons form their impressions of your post office through the communications they receive. Your message is similar to a picture of your post office.

Make sure that your communications are creating the right impressions by placing in each letter a personality that shows a warm friendliness.

Some of the best ways we have found to write postal communications are expressed in the following paragraphs.

Begin talking to people, for a letter is nothing but a substitute for what you would express if you were speaking to the addressee in person. Of course, in a letter you lose facial expressions and the written word is more direct, but the simple words and strictly conversational words that are used in every-day exchanges are the words the addressee wants to see and understands.

Friendliness is not just putting a few "thanks" and "pleases" in your communications. Friendliness comes from the heart and not from the brain. It means being considerate and thoughtful of your neighbor each time you visit or exchange ideas. As an example, compare: "Please send in Form No. 1510 so that we might clear our records. Thank you."

"So that your record will be complete, may we have Form No. 1510 at your earliest convenience."

The first example contains "please" and "thank you," whereas these two words have been omitted in the second instance. You will notice the first example is from the postmaster's viewpoint and the second is from the addressee's viewpoint. You know which of these phrases would receive the most favorable attention.

Remember to think of the other fellow's point of view when you write your letters. Talk from the lobby side of

the stamp window and try to see everything as he sees it. Think of what he gets rather than thinking too much of what you desire.

Make your messages sound like one person talking to another. Put real people in the communication. One of the best ways to do this is to use the addressee's name in the body of the message. We all like the sound of our name and in a letter, your patron likes to see his or her name. It will always make the patron feel most important. When you use the addressee's name, you will become more friendly and this warm atmosphere will be reflected in your entire communication.

Try saying "Thank you for your letter, Mr. Williams," instead of saying, "Thank you for your letter." Try the phrase, "These are the laws, Mr. Clarke," instead of "These are the laws." Another example would be better if we said "May we hear from you soon, Mr. Hart" instead of "May we hear from you soon."

Sometimes a postscript will serve a purpose and it is not an after thought. Ofttimes, letters are too formal and cold, and a short, unique message, if only four or five words, in your own handwriting, can be of greater help in warming up a letter which appears to be at a zero temperature.

Often an intentional postscript will help to draw attention to some important phase of your communication. Many patrons can skip, hop and jump over the page and in most cases, read the postscript because of the position which commands the patron's attention.

"Very truly yours" and many deviations have lost their luster. Create a complimentary close which is friendly instead of appearing stiff. Keep four or five friendly closings at your command, such as "Sincerely," "Cordially," "Thanks," "Your friend," Best wishes," etc.

Remember to write from your heart in making your letters friendly. Give the information wholeheartedly and be glad to be helpful. Be sure your message has warmth, sincerity and the kind of letter you would like to receive. Ofttimes, it has been said, the rose dies, but the fragrance lingers on. It is so with your letters. If you try testing your messages, you will find you can add new sparkle and you, as a postmaster, will get more enjoyment out of corresponding with your patrons.

How to Write a Letter

By CAMERON SHIPP

A Shorthand Way to Keep Your Friendships in Good Repair

Condensed from

The Christian Science Monitor and *The Readers Digest*

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Recently a man I know scrawled on the back of his bank statement: "We are eating three times a day. How are you?" and mailed it to me.

Not many of us have the nerve or the wit to send our bank statement to a friend instead of the letter we have been putting off for weeks. But this man could not have written a more interesting letter if he had polished phrases for hours. My family and I put in an evening trying to figure out his income and how he spent his money—which was precisely what he had intended.

Why is it so difficult for us to write a few short words on a piece of paper? Why is it that a man who is interesting when you meet him becomes as inarticulate as a fish the moment he takes pen in hand? And why does the brightest, friendliest woman you know swear she'd rather slave in a salt mine than write a letter? Why do *you* hate to write letters?

I think I know. We have been taught that letter writing is a formal thing, like drawing up one's will; that letters must be written on proper paper, with stately salutations and false-modest endings. We have been made to feel that a letter—even to an old friend or relative—has to be a society gesture, else the person who receives it will conclude that we don't know the rules of polite social behavior.

Two other reasons, I believe, why we shudder at the thought of writing a letter are: (1) I can't think of anything to say. (2) Who stole my pen? Nonsense!

Consider Richard Armour, who heads a department at Scripps College; he is one of our most prolific writers of light verse, is active in the military reserves and travels widely as a lecturer. Busy man, obviously. Yet he is a faithful, constant correspondent who turns out an average of a dozen written messages a day to friends and business acquaintances.

I said "written messages" because Armour seldom writes letters. He has discovered the postcard. He knows he seldom has anything to say that can't be put in less than 100 words, and he generally stays within 20. No salutation, no closing. Just:

"Good to see you last week. Kathleene and I leaving for San Francisco tomorrow. Agent likes my new book. Call you Monday when we return. Dick."

No literary pretensions. Just 25 words typed on a postcard, but how effective! He recalled a pleasant meeting, gave me two pieces of news, made an appointment. Most important, he kept in touch, let me know he had me in mind. This cost Armour two cents in money and perhaps one minute of time. If he can get away with this sort of thing, why not you?

One of the most famous letter writers in America today is the novelist and humorist, Homer Croy. It was he who sent his bank statement. His letters seldom run more than a dozen words.

Homer understands the fundamental fact of friendship: you must share your experiences. He often types or scrawls his lines on the backs of letters that people have written him. A recent example: "Cam—I saw Dale yesterday and we mentioned your name. Favorably, too. H. C." Just 12 words. He had seen an old friend and they had talked about me. He knew that I would read between the lines of this casual, un-newsworthy mail much that he did not need to say.

I turned the letter over. There was a note from a magazine editor accepting a story Croy had written. Mentioned the price, too. Croy had let me look over his shoulder, had shared an experience with me. Anybody can do the same.

My Aunt Margaret in North Carolina once sent me a receipted bill for her new hat which had cost \$28.75. On the reverse side she wrote "Whee!"

How much more eloquent and exciting that one word than eight or nine pages about Aunt Margaret's sinus, her recalcitrant tulips or her reasons for not having written sooner. I got a job, once, through a one-word letter. I had called several times on the late W. C. Dowd, Jr., publisher of the Charlotte News, but he had no opening. Three months later from another city, I wrote him:

Dear Mr. Dowd:

Yes?

Sincerely,

Cameron Shipp.

Mr. Dowd hired me, apparently believing that brevity might be a good thing in a reporter.

One friend of mine is a newspaper clipper. My name seldom appears in newspapers, but if it does and he sees it, he clips and mails it to me. But he is more likely to send along something about my home state, North Carolina, or about fruit trees in which I once had a disastrously expensive interest. It's surely one of the shortest and happiest ways to get around writing a letter.

Business letters are a special department, and a big one. Experts are cleaning up the correspondence of many corporations, eliminating hackneyed phrases, encouraging informality. There is even a movement afoot to delete the absurd "dear." Why call a man "dear" when you are about to complain that his company has been negligent with your order? Why call anybody "dear" except your own sweetie-pie?

One type of letter which troubles everybody is the letter of condolence. It is the hardest of all to write, but here especially the rule of brevity applies. Don't try to write a "beautiful" letter, or inscribe a "tribute" or an epitaph. Don't describe your own shock and amazement. And don't go overboard about religion. If your friend is religious he already has that best of all comforts; if not, his clergyman can express it better than you can.

The best letter of condolence I ever received said, "You know how sorry I am. Is there anything I can do?" There's not much more that anybody can say.

To sum it all up, here are a few simple rules about letter writing:

First: Be brief.

Second: Offer a piece of news or enclose something, such as a clipping, that will interest your friend.

Third: Don't try to show off your literary ability. Literary people seldom write "literary" letters.

Fourth: Forget the book of etiquette. Be informal, spontaneous, even unconventional. Be funny if you can, but don't try too hard.

Fifth: Write at least a few lines every day. There's always a pencil in the house. (There's no law requiring you to use pen and ink.)

Sixth: Use postcards liberally. They are the greatest advance in cheap communication since the smoke signal.

Seventh: Start now.

Parking No Longer a Problem—Another Patron-Relations Idea

For fifteen years, one of the greatest problems at this office has been the parking of automobiles for too long a period of time. Most of the patrons are either students or members of the faculty. It has been difficult to educate the faculty, as well as the students, of the need of the limited parking area in the transaction of postal business. A small minority each year park their cars in the parking area for as long as three to six hours a day and, therefore, create many hazards for other patrons.

Signs noting certain spaces are for no parking and other signs showing ten minutes parking have been useless. Ten minutes to many, has been the same as ten hours. Having the police tag the cars has not proven satisfactory for many would be dismissed with a warning.

A few months ago, the postmaster tried a new avenue of approach. This new approach is in line with good patron relations, and the benefits derived have been most pleasing. *Many times a few kind words will accomplish more than using the old whip.*

After a trial with this new parking tag used at the office, it has been found there is always plenty of parking space for the patrons, and warmer patrons interest with the post office. The new parking tag was created by the postmaster of the office and a specimen of the parking tag is reproduced on the next page.

Thousands of post offices throughout the nation have had other unusual experiences and very creative ideas to solve some patron-relations problem. Thousands of postmasters would like to learn of others' ideas. If you have suggestions or proven plans which have been successful at your office, please send your ideas to the national chairman of the educational committee for dissemination to the entire membership. Let other postmasters know of your experiences.